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Lambda Letters Project

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The Politics of Money

by Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

Every now and then I write an article that angers some people. This may be one of them. But please, as you read this article, understand that what I say is coming from a deep concern for people whose lives are very difficult.

So what's all this about the politics of money? I'm not talking about campaign contributions to legislators. I'm talking about our state budget deficit and how to resolve it. The choices that we and our legislators make to eliminate the deficit have profound moral implications. The choices we make say a lot about where our real values lie.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over 472,000 Californians live below the federal poverty level. The federal government defines the poverty level for a single person as an annual income of \$7,363 or below. For a family of four, the federal poverty level is an annual family income of \$14,763 or below. That's not much money to live on. Thousands of poor Californians have a very difficult life. Many of them depend on publicly funded programs to get adequate healthcare, low-cost housing, job training, help finding work, and numerous other health, education, and social services. Being poor in California is the pits, but the many

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Lambda Letters Project Revamps Its Website

by Stefan Gruenwedel, Newsletter Editor

In January Lambda Letters' website received a makeover to improve the way we disseminate information to our members and also to boost our image among those who are only learning about LLP now. If you haven't visited it recently, we think you'll enjoy the changes.

This is our World Wide Web address:

www.lambdaletters.org

Besides sharing the current news about LLP, we post all the text online that you receive in this newsletter—both articles and sample letters. We do this for a couple of reasons.

First, we give you the sample letter text so you can copy it into your word processor and customize it the way you like—give it your own voice and modify it so it says just what you want it to say. This increases the impact your letter has when the recipient reads it because it won't read word-for-word like any of the other letters we send out. Although all of our letters do count, it is also true that the more "personal" they read, the greater the impression they make.

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Lambda Letters Progress Report

Letters & Messages Collected

Nov. & Dec., 2002	11,157 letters & e-mails
In all of 2002	217,758 letters & e-mails

Dollars Spent

December, 2002	\$1,208
In all of 2002	\$49,840

Can You Help?

Please support the very important work of the Lambda Letters Project with your contributions.

Lambda Letters Project

Mission Statement

To promote people of color, feminist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV/AIDS status advocacy, and to bring people of color, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered and intersex persons, and persons affected by or living with HIV/AIDS into full participation in American society.

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(Appreciated but not required.)

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Have you experienced employment discrimination because of your actual or perceived sexual orientation or because of your age (40 and over), ancestry, color, creed, disability, marital status, medical condition, national origin, race, religion, or sex? Have you been denied family and medical care leave or pregnancy disability leave?

If so, you may register a complaint with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. In cases of employment discrimination, call the department at (800) 884-1684. In cases of housing discrimination, call (800) 233-3212.

The person answering the phone will schedule an appointment for you at the Department of Fair Employment and Housing Office which is closest to your home or place of employment.

Feds Fail Native Americans Again

by Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

Last November we asked you to write to Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton about her department's accounting of funds held in trust for Native Americans by the federal government. She had just been held in contempt of court for failing to provide an adequate accounting of those funds.

The story gets worse. In late December she was again called on the carpet by U.S. District Court Judge Royce Lamberth. Native American tribes and several individual Native Americans are represented by attorneys in a lawsuit to force the federal government to produce an accurate accounting of the funds. These tribes and individuals are the plaintiffs in the case. They represent more than 300,000 Native Americans in a class-action suit demanding an accounting of perhaps billions of dollars in royalties from American Indian lands held in trust by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. The trusteeship of these royalties began with a treaty signed in 1887, when the U.S. took 90 million acres from Indian tribes. The Interior Department then took charge of managing grazing, timber, and oil and gas drilling on those lands. In return for the lands the government agreed to pay royalties for these uses of the lands.

Normally in such a situation the government would not be permitted to talk to the plaintiffs without the court's permission and without first notifying the plaintiff's lawyers. However, the government sent letters directly to the plaintiffs without first notifying and getting the permission of the court and the plaintiff's lawyers. To make matters even worse, the letters gave an accounting of the Indian funds. It went on to say that

Support HIV Funding Increases in FY03-04

by Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

Please write your member of the House of Representatives and urge him or her to support the highest appropriation levels for all HIV programs in the fiscal years for 2003 and 2004.

A new session of Congress began on January 7, 2003. A top priority for the Congress is to complete budget negotiations for fiscal year 2003 (FY03), which runs from October 1, 2002, through September 30, 2003. The appropriations bills for FY03 should have been approved prior to *last* October 1, but that didn't happen.

Congressional leaders may soon seek passage of a massive appropriations package, known as an omnibus bill, establishing annual funding levels for a broad array of federal programs for FY03. In this case, Congress would likely consider President Bush's proposed 2003 budget as the blueprint for final funding amounts—a proposal that contains no funding increases for domestic or global HIV/AIDS prevention or care programs.

Continued on page 5

this accounting was final and could not be appealed unless the plaintiffs submitted an appeal within a very short period of time.

Judge Lamberth hit the roof when he heard about this. He prohibited the government from sending any further letters to the plaintiffs. He said the court had not approved any accounting of the Indian funds and it was grossly premature for the government to speak of a final accounting. He said the conduct of the government's lawyers clearly violated the usual court rules governing attorney conduct. For that reason he sent the names of those attorneys to the disciplinary panel of the U.S. District Court in Washington, DC. This could result in penalties which might include disbarment of those attorneys from the further practice of law.

Clearly the Bush administration is not getting the message. This month we ask that you write to President Bush and urge him to direct Interior Secretary Norton to provide promptly an accurate accounting of the funds held in trust for Native Americans. ###

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Support Binational, Same-Sex Couples

by Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

U.S. law sets specific conditions that allow a citizen of another country (an alien) to immigrate legally to this country. One of those conditions is marriage. If an alien marries a U.S. citizen, then that alien—barring any other problems—may legally obtain permanent residency here. However, when a couple is of the same gender (such as domestic partners in California or people in civil unions in Vermont) their relationship does not qualify the alien for permanent residence in this country.

On or about Valentine's Day, Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-New York) will introduce a bill to correct this situation. Called the Permanent Partners Immigration Act of 2003, this bill would allow aliens—in what we call domestic partnerships—to qualify for permanent residency in the U.S. The bill calls these people "permanent partners."

Nadler has actually introduced this bill several times over the past few years. Last year's version was HR 690. A bill number will be assigned to this year's version once it is introduced. HR 690 had 106 cosponsors in the House of Representatives. Almost a quarter of those sponsors (25 of them) were from California. Table 1 lists those representatives from California who cosponsored the bill. To see if your representative is among them, look for the enclosed sample letter that deals with the Permanent Partners Immigration Act. Look at the name of the representative to which that letter is addressed; if his or her name is in Table 1, shown at right, then your representative was a cosponsor.

We need to get all of those representatives to cosponsor this year's version of the bill. We need to persuade even more of our representatives to do it this year. Please write to your member of the House of Representatives and urge him or her to support this important bill.

If your representative did not cosponsor HR 690 last year, consider asking your friends and neighbors to call your representative and ask him or her to cosponsor Nadler's Permanent Partners Immigration Act. To reach your representative's office, call (800) 648-3516 toll-free. Ask the operator to transfer you to the office of your representative, whose name is at the top of the sample letter with this newsletter.

###

Table 1. Sponsors of HR 690 in 2002

Representative	Party	District
Xavier Becerra	D	Los Angeles
Howard Berman	D	Mission Hills
Anna Eshoo	D	Palo Alto
Sam Farr	D	Salinas
Bob Filner	D	Chula Vista
Jane Harman	D	Redondo Beach
Michael Honda	D	San Jose
Tom Lantos	D	San Mateo
Barbara Lee	D	Oakland
Zoe Lofgren	D	San Jose
Robert Matsui	D	Sacramento
George Miller	D	Concord
Grace Napolitano	D	Montebello
Nancy Pelosi	D	San Francisco
Lucille Roybal-Allard	D	Los Angeles
Loretta Sanchez	D	Garden Grove
Adam Schiff	D	Pasadena
Hilda Solis	D	Elmonte
Fortney (Pete) Stark	D	Fremont
Ellen Taucher	D	Walnut Creek
Mike Thomson	D	Napa
Maxine Waters	D	Los Angeles
Diane Watson	D	Los Angeles
Henry Waxman	D	Los Angeles
Lynn Woolsey	D	Santa Rosa

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Help Afghan Women

by Teri Ford and Adrienne Lauby

The Taliban may be gone but the new regime has adopted many of the same policies toward women. For Afghan women, repression continues.

Women are allowed to attend school but many restrictions make this difficult. Women are not allowed to be alone with men who are not closely related to them. Failure to follow this official policy of the Afghanistan government can lead to harassment and arrest by the police—and an abusive, humiliating gynecological exam conducted at the local hospital.

Travel is nearly impossible for women in Afghanistan. Women cannot drive; the government refuses to issue driver's licenses to women. Taxis are scarce. Women are not allowed to be alone with unrelated males, so taxis are inaccessible to women unless the driver is a relative. Afghan women do not ride bicycles because their attire is cumbersome and make bicycles unsafe.

Women are discouraged from forming organizations or speaking about women's rights. Women are kept out of most government organizations and pressured away from work for foreign organizations.

To work, women must completely cover themselves and stay away from unrelated men.

These restrictive policies jeopardize access to healthcare and income for Afghan women and their families, especially widows. Food, shelter, and income remain the basic concerns of the women of Afghanistan. The Afghan Freedom Support Act of 2002, signed by President Bush, authorizes \$2.3 billion to fund the reconstruction of Afghanistan. One billion dollars is to be used to expand the international peacekeeping force. Fifteen million dollars each year is to be appropriated

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HIV/AIDS Issue

Continued from page 3

If people around the country send enough letters asking for increases to the AIDS budget, members of Congress may push Congressional leaders to request funding increases for specific programs. Your letters can make a difference in whether HIV/AIDS programs receive the funding they need. Urge your member of Congress to invest in tomorrow by fighting HIV/AIDS today.

Consider also calling your representative on this issue and asking your neighbors to do the same. You can call the Capitol switchboard toll-free at (800) 648-3516. They will be happy to transfer you to your Congress member's office. In case you don't know who your representative is, look for the name at the top of the sample AIDS funding letter with this newsletter.

Alternatively, you can always go to the Lambda Letters website to find out who represents you. Go to www.lambdaletters.org and click on the words "Who Represents You?" in the left column. Fill in your street address and click the Submit button. You will see a list of your member of Congress and the State Legislature.

Here is a message you can leave when you call your Congress member's office:

"Please encourage your colleagues on the Appropriations Committee and in the House and Senate leadership to ensure that final negotiations on the 2003 and 2004 budgets include much needed funding increases for AIDS prevention, Ryan White CARE Act programs, the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative, global AIDS, and other healthcare services that millions of people rely on for survival."

We gratefully acknowledge that much of the information in this article was provided by AIDS Project Los Angeles.

###

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February Legislative Update

The legislative process is in full swing with many bills being introduced. There are some important deadlines now coming into play.

Whenever a legislator wants to introduce a bill, he or she sends the concept of the bill to the Legislative Counsel's office. That office creates the actual wording of the bill, although the final wording may result from some negotiations between the Legislative Counsel and the legislator who wants to introduce the bill. The deadline for the submission of bill concepts was January 24.

Then there is a second deadline. All bills must actually be introduced in the legislature by no later than February 21. Any further bills must wait until next year.

The rules may be different for bills introduced in a special session. These bills will have an x in their name, such as ABX 1. A special session can occur alongside a regular legislative session. The legislators merely say, "Now we are in a special session" or "Now we are in the regular session."

Special sessions of the legislature are originally convened by the governor; they usually deal with just one issue. For example in December 2002 Governor Davis declared a special session of the legislature to deal with the state's budget crisis. That special session is still going on alongside the regular session of the legislature.

Here are the bills we are tracking now.

HIV/AIDS Issues

AB 4 (Wilma Chan, D–Oakland)

Purpose: To increase personal income tax rates, beyond the present maximum of 9.3 percent, for that portion of the taxable income of an individual exceeding \$130,000 and for that portion of taxable income of married taxpayers filing jointly exceeding \$260,000.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support. This will reduce the pressure to cut important health programs.

SB 71 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Los Angeles)

Purpose: Among other things, to authorize school districts to provide comprehensive sexual health education, as defined, in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12,

inclusive, and would require school districts to ensure that all pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, receive HIV/AIDS prevention education.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Issues

AB 17 (Christine Kehoe, D–San Diego)

Purpose: To prohibit a state agency from entering into a contract for the acquisition of goods or services with a vendor or contractor who does not offer benefits to domestic partner employees, as defined, that are equal to benefits offered to employees with spouses, except as otherwise specified.

Status: Referred to Assembly Judiciary Committee.

No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 18 (Mark Leno, D–San Francisco)

Purpose: To provide that nothing in state Fair Employment and Housing Act shall be construed to prohibit a city, county, or other political subdivision of the state from providing or maintaining greater protections against discrimination than those provided by the act. This might allow cities and counties to specifically ban discrimination against transgendered people.

Status: Referred to Assembly Judiciary Committee.

No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 75 (Gloria Negrete McLeod, D–Montclair)

Purpose: To authorize agencies contracting with California's Public Employee Retirement System to provide the survivors of a deceased, retired local firefighter an allowance equal to 40 percent of a specified portion of the deceased member's retirement allowance plus 75 percent of the remaining portion of the deceased member's allowance.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Public Employees, Retirement and Social Security Committee.

LLP Position: Support if domestic partners are added to the list of eligible survivors. No hearing date set yet.

AB 76 (Ellen Corbett, D–San Leandro)

Purpose: To make it unlawful for an employer to fail to take immediate and appropriate corrective action to prevent harassment of an employee by any person, once the employer knows or should have known of this conduct.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

People of Color Issues

AB 9 (Mervyn Dymally, D-Compton)

Purpose: To establish at the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in Los Angeles the Urban Community Health Institute, Centers to Eliminate Health Disparities (to be operated in conjunction with the Regents of the University of California and the University of California at Los Angeles) to address disparities in the delivery of health services to multicultural populations in specified areas of Los Angeles County.

Status: Referred to Assembly Health Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 30 (Keith Richman, R-Granada Hills)

Purpose: To require the state to expand the Healthy Families Program to provide health insurance coverage to employed childless adults who are uninsured for healthcare coverage and who meet certain household income requirements, subject to approval of a federal waiver and appropriation of state matching funds.

Status: Referred to Assembly Health Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 54 (Jenny Oropeza, D-Carson)

Purpose: To require the California Research Bureau, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to contract with an independent evaluator to conduct a study of the availability and effectiveness of cross-cultural training for public school teachers and administrators. The bill would require the study to focus on 10 culturally diverse schools that reflect the diverse demography and geography of California and would prescribe criteria for selecting those schools.

Status: Referred to Assembly Education Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 59 (Mervyn Dymally, D-Compton)

Purpose: To establish the California Commission for the Preservation of African-American History, Culture. It would require the commission to conduct public hearings to identify the contributions of African-Americans to California history and culture, chronicle the activities of African-Americans who have made signifi-

cant contributions to the history and culture of California in all fields of endeavor, and identify institutions and places of significance in the contributions of African-Americans to the history and culture of California and provide for the placement of an appropriate marker at these sites.

Status: Referred to Assembly Arts and Entertainment Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 62 (Rudy Bermudez, D-Bellflower)

Purpose: To allow a person to apply for a special set of commemorative, reflectorized license plates jointly honoring Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez, and to require the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue those special license plates in lieu of regular license plates. The bill would require those license plates to be of a distinctive design, containing both the names "Martin Luther King Jr." and "Cesar Chavez."

Status: Referred to Assembly Transportation Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

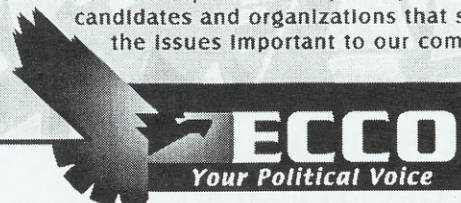
Continued on page 8

ECCO is pleased to support the Lambda Letters Project.

**ECCO is proud to be a part of
the activist LGBT community.
When we work together, we can
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Join us as we financially assist local, state, and federal candidates and organizations that support the issues important to our community.



www.eccopac.org

Legislative Update

Continued from page 7

SB 4 (Dennis Hollingsworth, R–Riverside)

Purpose: Commencing with taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2003, to reduce all marginal tax rates, as provided, and to eliminate the tax on taxable income and the alternative minimum tax for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2007.

Status: Referred to Senate Revenue and Tax Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Oppose. The tax cuts are unreasonable when the state is considering massive cuts to education and health programs.

SB 24 (Liz Figueroa, D–Fremont)

Purpose: To require the Department of Health Services to make it easier for poor people to qualify for healthcare coverage by implementing a seamless, coordinated healthcare program. It would enable participating healthcare providers to screen and initiate an accelerated enrollment process for eligible individuals into the Medi-Cal program or the Healthy Families Program at the time medical care is provided. The bill would require the department to exercise its option

under federal law and submit the necessary federal waiver to allow providers to engage in this process.

Status: Referred to Senate Health and Human Services Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 38 (Wes Chesbro, D–Santa Rosa)

Purpose: To provide that federally qualified health center services and rural health clinic services, as defined, are covered benefits under the Medi-Cal program, to be reimbursed to providers on a per-visit basis. The bill would also provide for various requirements pertaining to the reimbursement of these services.

Status: Referred to Senate Health and Human Services Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 43 (Gil Cedillo, D–Los Angeles)

Purpose: To provide an easy way for people to contribute to the Emergency Food Assistance Program Fund by submitting extra money with taxes owed to the state each year. The bill would permit this until January 1, 2009.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

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SB 57 (John Burton, D—San Francisco)

Purpose: To adjust the hourly minimum wage on January 1, 2004, and annually thereafter, to maintain employee purchasing power.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

SCR 3 (Dean Florez, D—Bakersfield)

Purpose: To designate a portion of State Route 42 near Fresno as the Rosa Parks Freeway.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

SJR 3 (Richard Alarcon, D—Van Nuys)

Purpose: To urge Congress to increase Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant funding to certain states; allow states until January 1, 2005, to use TANF funds for eligible families who have used 60 months of TANF eligibility; and consider “stopping the clock” on TANF assistance for recipients who are meeting work participation requirements or live in counties with high unemployment rates.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

Women's Issues

AB 23 (Joe Nation, D—San Rafael)

Purpose: To state the intent of the legislature to enact legislation that would require healthcare providers to accept and support specified rights of mammography patients, and that these patients accept specified responsibilities.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 134 (Rebecca Cohn, D—Campbell)

Purpose: In certain circumstances, to increase the penalty for domestic violence if the accused had been convicted previously of domestic violence.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 143 (Rebecca Cohn, D—Campbell)

Purpose: To express the intent of the legislature to enact legislation to authorize a court to award temporary support to a person who is a victim of domestic violence prior to requiring that person to file for di-

vorce, legal separation, or nullity of marriage and spousal, child, or family support.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 145 (Alan Lowenthal, D—Long Beach)

Purpose: To require probation officers to receive initial and refresher training in domestic violence.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

ACR 6 (Rebecca Cohn, D—Campbell)

Purpose: To proclaim the month of October 2003 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Status: Referred to Assembly Rules Committee. May not need hearings from policy or appropriations committees.

LLP Position: Support.

ACR 11 (Rebecca Cohn, D—Campbell)

Purpose: To proclaim October 8, 2003, as Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day.

Status: Referred to Assembly Rules Committee. May not need hearings from policy or appropriations committees.

LLP Position: Support.

ACR 14 (George Nakano, D—Torrance)

Purpose: To declare February 19, 2003, as a Day of Remembrance in order to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II.

Status: Introduced.

LLP Position: Support.

AJR 2 (Hannah-Beth Jackson, D—Santa Barbara)

Purpose: To tell Congress and the president to stand firm in their resolve to uphold the intent and substance of the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* relating to reproductive rights, and to encourage all Americans to participate in the national celebration, “Celebrating 30 Years of *Roe v. Wade*,” in recognition of that decision's historic importance in promoting women's rights.

Status: Approved by Assembly Judiciary Committee. Sent to the assembly floor for a final vote in that house.

LLP Position: Support.

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The Politics of Money

Continued from page 1

publicly funded programs help to make it a little less unbearable.

Governor Davis has submitted his proposal for eliminating the budget deficit. He proposes that 64 percent of the deficit be eliminated by cutting the budgets of state-funded programs. He says that 24 percent of the deficit should be covered by increased taxes and the remainder should be covered by shifting funds from one program to another, along with other miscellaneous changes. He suggests an increase in the income tax rates for Californians with the highest incomes. However, he also proposes increasing the sales tax by one percent and increasing the annual vehicle license fee from its current rate of less than 1 percent to a new level of 2 percent of the value of the car. In addition, the governor proposes more than doubling the fees of community colleges from \$11 per unit, as they are now, to \$24 per unit.

Who is paying for most of these budget revisions? Clearly it is poor people in California. The whopping 64 percent of the solution that comes out of state-funded programs will decimate many important programs that are essential to the well-being of the poor. The sales tax will be the same for everyone in raw numbers. But for a person earning only \$7,000 a year, those sales taxes will mean a *much* greater percentage of his or her income than for a person earning \$50,000 a year. The same is true of the increased vehicle license fee.

Consider the hike in fees for community college courses. Community colleges have been among the most affordable sources of higher education in California. Even relatively poor people can afford them. The courses they take in community colleges have provided a path out of poverty for many of them. Now that path will be too expensive for many to take.



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Women's Issue

Continued from page 5

for the Ministry of Women's Affairs and another \$5 million a year is to be given to the Human Rights Commission to fund their efforts. Congress passed this Act before it adjourned but Bush's budget for 2003 does not include funding for the Act.

Afghan women want the freedom to work in an unrestricted environment, to organize peacefully, and to speak freely. President Bush is not fulfilling his promises and is, in effect, helping the Afghanistan government deny women their rights. Please sign the sample letter enclosed with this newsletter to let your Congressperson know how you feel on this issue.

Thanks to Z Magazine (www.zmag.org/ZMagSite/Dec2002/kolhatkar1202.htm) and the Feminist Majority (www.feminist.org/news) for help with researching this article. ###



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It is clear that there are going to be major cuts in publicly funded programs in California; they just shouldn't be anywhere as deep as those proposed by the governor. More of the problem should be solved by increasing taxes on California's wealthiest citizens. In fact, increasing the income taxes on California's wealthiest citizens should be the primary taxing tool used. Poor people will already be contributing to the solution by those budget cuts; they shouldn't be asked to contribute even more in the form of increased sales taxes, vehicle license fees, and community college fees.

So here is the moral question: Is it best to settle the budget deficit mainly by adding to the burdens of poor people or by making life a little more difficult for those of us who are already better off? What do you think? Let me know at LambdaLP@aol.com. We'd be happy to print your responses on the Lambda Letters website. ###

Seeking Transgender Discrimination Testimonials

by Roslyn Manley

As you know, transgender individuals may be subjected to discrimination in employment and commercial or public services when their transgender history is known, discovered, or suspected. We are searching for documentable experiences where transgenders have experienced such discrimination in one or more of the following subject areas.

Insurance

Have you been wrongly refused medical services on the basis of Gender Identity Disorder (GID)? For example, requiring a hysterectomy for non-GID reasons, but the insurance carrier or HMO refused to provide coverage because you are transgender?

Have you attempted to privately purchase any sort of insurance and been refused because you are transgender? This would include health, life, disability, homeowners, renters, automobile, professional liability, or any other sort of insurance.

Have you attempted to privately purchase any sort of insurance and been quoted an increased (rated) premium because you were transgender?

Have you been refused employment or been terminated from employment because the bonding company would not bond you due to your transgender history?

Foster Care

Are you qualified to be a foster parent but been refused because you are transgender or gay? Do you have direct knowledge of any LGBT child in the foster care system who has been subjected to discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Employment

Within the past three years, have you been terminated, refused promotion, or refused employment because the employer perceived you as a masculine woman or as a feminine man? Note that this question applies to heterosexuals and non-transgenders as well.

LLP Revamps Its Website

Continued from page 1

Second, we provide the newsletter text online so that you can share what we're all about with friends, family, or coworkers who may not be members or may not know who we are. Sending links to our site is an easy way to spread the word.

When you visit our website you'll see a list of links on the left. These give you instant access to our four core areas: LGBT, HIV/AIDS, People of Color, and Women's issues. The Legislative Update shows the same list of current legislation that you see in the newsletter but we also include links to the full bill text online, which we couldn't possibly provide each month in print.

The links to the Governor's Scorecard, Senate Scorecard, and Assembly Scorecard show you the results of research that LLP has conducted on the voting records of our state's elected officials. Check out these scorecards and see how well your representative is voting.

We also provide a means for you to find out who represents you. It can be a complicated process but if you give us your address we can let you know the names of your representatives.

Finally, we give you links to more information about Lambda Letters Project: who we are, who supports us, and how you can join the growing list of sponsors. We also provide links to other like-minded organizations' websites, and show up-to-the-minute news headlines from 365gay.com and PlanetOut.

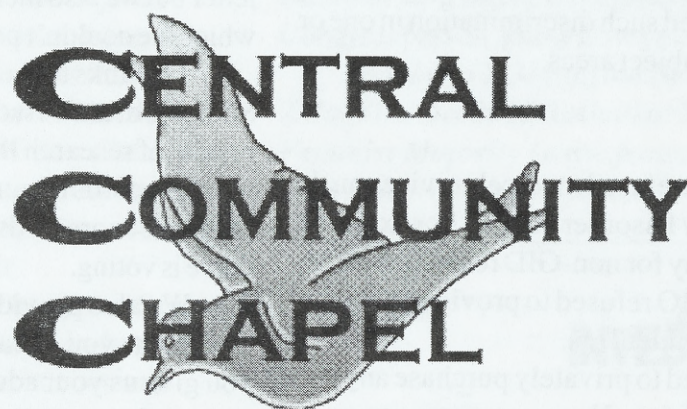
We hope you enjoy the redesigned LLP website and will visit it often to find out what's new with us and the issues we cover. For any comments or problems with the site, please e-mail me at sgorsp@peoplepc.com. ###

Within the past three years, have you been terminated, refused promotion, or refused employment because the employer was aware of your transgender history?

If you have experienced any such discrimination, your story may assist us in designing new legislation; some of you may be asked to provide testimony. Please send a summary of your experiences to me at MzRoslyn@mindspring.com and remember to your provide your address and telephone number.

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